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The Woman's Convention

PUNKVILLE

U. S. A.

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by
Eudora Hollinshead Slocumb

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Dedicated to the "other half," who laughs and cries with me.
—Eudora Hollinshead Slocumb.

PREFACE

Just a little brochure of fun and folly, with the questions of Suffrage the incentive. No attempt is made at consistency, for that is a woman's prerogative to ignore. I cannot resist appending the following "Little Girl's Composition on Men," quoted from Monroe City, Mo., News:

"Men are what women marry. They drink and smoke, and swear, but don't go to church. Perhaps if they wore bonnets they would. They are more logical than women, and also more zoological. Both men and women sprang from monkeys, but the women sprang further than the men."

CAST OF CHARACTERS

President—Mrs. Sophronia Surfeit.

Secretary—Mrs. Lily Loppe.

Mayor's Representative—Honorable Jimima Taggit.

Minister—Rev. Josephine Purge.

Visitors from Abroad—Arabella Spankhurst, Lady Castlewood Caustic, Mrs. Bellamont Astoria.

Editor Woman's Political Prognosticator—Mrs. Polly Pry.

Woman with too many children—Mrs. John Jones.

She jines the Union—Bridget Maloney.

Recitation—The Latchkey Forever—Euphemia Stillmaid.

Chairman Civic Committee—Mrs. Quietus Slickem.

Chairman New City Charter—Mrs. Georgia Sparks.

The scared little woman—Mrs. Katie Coward.

She gets things mixed—Mrs. Mollie Queerem.

The Perfect Lady—Mrs. Van Proper.

From Sout St. Looie—Wilhelmina Buschweiser.

Representatives, House of Delegates—Mrs. Clancy Bunkum, Mrs. Mike Feelin.

President—"Pink Cat Club" from Jefferson City—Mrs. Tabby Garralous, assisted by Mrs. Spat, Mrs. Spout, Mrs. Spat, Mrs. Sport, Mrs. Sputter.

Two little girls from school—Susy Green, Fanny Bashful.

Chairman House of Delegates—Mrs. Harry Gettum.

For Da Banan—Mrs. Paolo Simpleanna.

Usher—Mrs. Katie Goat.

DESCRIPTIVE

Scene—A Convention Hall, decorated with bunting, mottoes and banners. At one end of stage a Speaker's stand, behind which the President and Secretary sit. Back of them are the Minister, Rev. Josephine Purge, the Mayor's representative, the Honorable Jimima Taggit, and the three visitors from abroad, Mrs. Spankhurst, Lady Castlewood Caustic, and Mrs. Bellamont Astoria.

At the other end of stage sit the pseudo convention, who pass powder puffs and chewing gum to one another, and indulge in surreptitious glances in hand-mirrors wherein hats are straightened and hair arranged. They always applaud whenever a reference is made to man's subjection.

They manifest much interest in Bridget Maloney's "breaks" and are annoyed and disgusted when Wilhelmina Buschweiser appears, and disappears.

In the back of stage in center is a telephone stand, on which sets a telephone and by this stand a chair. The suggestion is made that Bridget Maloney wear bright green, with green hat trimmed in purple, and purple silk gloves, and an extravagant display of beads, ear-rings and bracelets. This may be made a strong character part, and should be taken by a woman of ability.

Wilhelmina Buschweiser is a decided character that must also be taken by a capable person. Her carrying a live goose is insisted on, as it is symbolic, in a way, of the attitude and type of character she is trying to portray.

Many local hits may be worked into the New City Charter and expounded by Mrs. Georgia Sparks.

Usher frequently passes tray, on which are gum, lemonade and peppermints.

It is suggested that the Minister wear a college cap and gown, and assiduously crochet during the business of the convention.

The Woman's Convention

PUNKVILLE, U. S. A.

President (pounding gavel): The meeting will please come to order. The secretary may read the minutes of the previous meeting of the local society of Punkville.

Secretary: The last meeting of the Universal Suffering Society was held in the City Hall, in the Council Chamber.

The motion was made and seconded that the *re*proach to the White House in Washington, D. C., be cleared of all objectionable impediments, and the way brightly lighted by—(Secretary hesitates and then spells slowly) t-o-n-g-u-e tongue—oh yes, Tungsten Burners, so that Suffragists will not stumble on the way in, and can also see their way out. The vote in favor of this was unanimous.

It is proposed to reverse the ends of Pullman cars. An even trade —women hereafter to have the big roomy smoker devoted hitherto to man's exclusive use—the men to be welcome to the two-by-four apartment, where woman has endured martyrdom so long, hanging on a peg while she buttoned up her back—powdered her nose and combed Minnie's hair. The discussion brought out many points in favor of this change—and the relation of many harrowing experiences, such as being obliged to stand in the wash-basin for lack of room, seemed to confirm the necessity of making this change. A committee of investigation was appointed.

Madam Georgia Sparks spoke on "Man's Relation to the Universe as an Atom." She spoke briefly and to the point, and her talk excited much favorable comment. Her deduction of the missing rib in man as indicating a tendency toward spinelessness was well taken.

A discussion as to woman's eligibility to vote aroused much enthusiasm. It was decided that *women* were *people,* and that only those people should be allowed to vote who were competent and who were responsible as tax payers.

Madam Slickem recommended a law being passed, limiting the working hours of men confined in the house to ten hours a day. After a heated discussion, it was laid over for further consideration.

A speaker from the City Council was present and presented a plan for beautifying the City. It is proposed to build a dam over the most convenient body of water, thereby raising the water sufficiently to wash the old town clean, after which the way will be clear to plant weeping willows and alfalfa as suggested.

Mrs. Harry Gettum's motion to adjourn was accepted, the next meeting to be held at the present date.

Respectfully, Lilly Loppe, Sec.

President: If there are no objections the minutes stand approved.

Four or five jump to their feet, clamoring for recognition.

(*President recognizing Mrs. Van Proper.*)

Mrs. Van Proper: I object to the Secretary's pronunciation of Suffrage. It sounded as though she said suffering, which is far from the truth, and if I am not mistaken she said *re*proach, instead of *ap*proach to the White House, which is too near the truth to be polite.

President: The minutes stand corrected.

Mrs. Queerum: I didn't understand that *dam* project; will you please explain it again?

President: The secretary will explain it to you after the meeting, Mrs. Queerum.

(*President recognizing Katie Coward.*)

Katie Coward: Madame President, I live on the water front, will they let us know a quarter of an hour ahead, when they let the water in?

Bridget Maloney (jumping to her feet): And shure it would be a dhirty thrick——

(*Mrs. Jones' children interrupt by frightened and loud crying.*)

President (loudly pounding gavel): Ladies! Ladies! Will you be quiet! (*Looking severely at Mrs. Jones*)—Children should be kept where they belong. Isn't your husband at home?

(*Quiet is finally restored and President sweetly says*—)

President: The Reverend Josephine Purge will now offer a short effatum. (*Dic. defin. solemn utterance.*)

Rev. Josephine: I hope you all feel the solemnity of the occasion as I do. This is in its way an epoch, and we are the epochians. Let there be no levity on this great occasion, but with low necks and bare arms enter the fray, and do your duty, and your husband's duty. No longer must we grope for a man's heart through his stomach, but will demand it through the ballot box, as the "new woman's prerogative." From my heart I give you a blessing on this great movement, and hope you will always feel the necessity of the meetings being opened, as they are today, by an orthodox representative at so much per annum.

(*Interruption, Bridget Maloney*): Faith! and phat church do she belong to? (A friendly hand pulls her down in her chair.)

President: The Mayor of Punkville being indisposed, her representative, the Honorable Jimima Taggit will extend to you an address of welcome.

Hon. Jim: Fellow Citizens:—It is with great pleasure I greet you on this momentous occasion. I wish I could express to you as feelingly as did the Mayor, her regret at not being able to be present. Unfortunately, the extreme youth of the twins make her presence at home imperative. But she wishes to extend the welcome of Punkville to her guests, and to assure you that with this key (*extending a key a foot long*) she extends to you the freedom of the city, until the curfew bell, which rings promptly at nine. After that no one but women policemen are allowed on the street and all lights are out. She hopes you will visit our beautiful tea-room (only tea, certified milk and Bryan grape juice are sold) and that our censored theater (where only maiden ladies of mature years are allowed to perform) will assist in entertaining you.

I respectfully retire and give you the privilege of your convention.

(*Mrs. Polly Pry stands for recognition.*)

(*President recognizing her.*)

Mrs. Polly: I have had frequent editorials in my paper in regard to that very thing!

President: What "thing" do you refer to, Mrs. Pry?

Mrs. Polly: Why, that thing of the Mayor's twins. I consider them most ill-advised, and the whole thing as thoroughly reprehensible. I do not know, Madame President, whether it would be considered sufficient to impeach the Mayor or not, have we any by-laws on the subject?

(*Inter.—Bridget Maloney—in an aside*): Shure and can't a woman raise a family on the side, so to spake!

President: I would refer that to the committee on rules. Make a note of it, Mrs. Secretary.

Mrs. Pry: I do not consider it necessary for me to add another word on the subject. There is absolutely no argument on the other side, none whatever! And I have not heard that the Mayor has offered any excuse. It seems to me she might at least have had the grace to apologize. I move, Madame President, that we overlook this one defect, with the understanding that under no circumstances is it to occur again.

Mrs. Mike Feelin: I second that motion.

(*President presents motion.*) All say "aye" with enthusiasm except Bridget who says *"no"* emphatically. Pres. ignores Bridget's "no" and announces with decision):

President: It is unanimous.

(*President now makes her address*):

It is with great pleasure we greet such a representative body of fellow workers, and it is my privilege today, as the head of an organization that will be felt to the uttermost parts of the earth, to state that through this body laws have become enacted that will forever liberate woman from the petty thralldom of housekeeping and child-rearing.

(*Wild applause.*)

We have with us today two eminent citizens from abroad, and one of New York's most prominent workers in this special field.

I will first introduce the Honorable Arabella Spankhurst from England, who will speak on the "Englishman's attitude to milk-fed chickens."

Mrs. Spankhurst: Fellow Citizens:—I have hardly warmed up from the chilly reception you gave me on landing in your free and easy country, but I hope to do so today, and I must be pardoned if things I say may seem to reflect on the world in general and the opposite sex in particular.

(*Noisy clapping.*)

It is with diffidence I approach the subject of milk-fed chickens, feeling as I do, that in a way I belong to that family.

To the average Englishman, the fact that the English woman is eligible to become his wife, he deems of sufficient importance to obscure all other details of life. Considering himself more capable of thinking for her than she is for herself, he considers it an impertinence on her part to attempt such a thing. As for his forcible feeding of her through a hose—he considers that perfectly legitimate, and his right, for isn't he her natural provider?

That woman should cast an acquisitive eye on the two P's, "Parliament" and "Property" is an unpardonable offense in his eyes. The only P's she has an inalienable right to, are piety and propriety.

Furthermore, you all know of the reputed surgical operation required on an Englishman's head to get anything through. While this is not well authenticated, it is known that if a thought once lodges there, it cannot be rooted out short of blowing him up. Therefore we have assumed that pleasant and arduous duty, and expect in the next generation to have cleaned out sufficiently to have established a new, and possibly manless, propaganda.

I regret that President Wilson's limited invitation of ten days will hardly allow me to demonstrate our methods in your inert and indolent country, but I have endeavored to give you food for reflection, which food you don't have to take through a hose.

I thank you for your breathless attention, and yield to the other speakers on the program.

(*Prolonged applause.*)

President: Miss Euphemia Stillmaid will now deliver a poem, the latest effusion of the author of "Three White Mice."

Miss Euphemia:

Oh Great Intelligence, give us a hunk,
Assist us all to show the proper spunk.
Give our dear men the patience of their sex,
Safe in their homes, no outward cares to vex,
And let there be no rude and bloody war—
Content to battle with our tongues we are.
With pockets in our coats and two-leg skirts
We'll use our husband's patterns for our shirts,
And thus equipped we'll face our duty true,
And start right out to do what we can do.
We'll whet our plow-shares into curling irons
And let our husbands do the kitchen fireins.
Good men and true, we'll train them in the way
We meekly trod in that forgotten day.
Our powder puffs we'll make from U. S. flags—
To show our patriotism; and the man who brags
Of guns and swords and other things of war
We'll teach the knowledge of things, as they are.
We'll carry the latch key to the bitter end,
And then some, for indeed we do intend
To demonstrate our freedom from the thrall
Of petty bread and bed, and cooks and all
The limitations of the erstwhile maid
Who did the work, and took what she was paid.

Usher: Madame President, Mrs. Van Proper's husband is at the door and wishes to speak to her.

President (*severely*): Mrs. Van Proper, doesn't your husband know that you are engaged at this hour?

Mrs. Van Proper (*meekly*): I guess he had to come when the baby was asleep.

President: Very well, but I hope it will not occur again.

Mrs. Mollie Queerem: Madame President——

(*President recog. Mrs. Queerem.*)

Mrs. Mollie Queerem: I don't understand. Do you refer to the husband or the baby?

President (dignifiedly): I was speaking to Mrs. Van Proper, Mrs. Queerem.

Mrs. Queerem (still standing): Yes, but I was asking you——

President (interrupting): Mrs. Queerem, you are out of order; please sit down.

(*Mrs. Queerem angrily bounces down.*)

(*Mrs. Van Proper steps out, then in again, and says*): Madame President, my husband and a few of his friends want to know if they can come in for a little while this afternoon.

President (*majestically*): I am sorry, but I hardly think we can have them today as the program is so crowded with business they would neither comprehend nor enjoy—but perhaps tomorrow afternoon we can have a light, breezy program that they can appreciate.

Mrs. Van Proper: Thank you. (*Goes out to explain.*)

President: I would request that the Chairman of the Arrangements Committee see that the hall is decorated with cut flowers, daisies and baby blue ribbon would be a sweet color scheme, so appropriate and symbolic! And that a few ash trays be provided and passed on the gum tray.

Chairman Ar. Com., Mrs. Jones: I will attend to it, Madame President, and can we have some light refreshments, say chocolate and whipped cream?

President: I consider that a very good suggestion. We will now proceed with the regular business. We have two speakers on the question, "Should Women Obey the Law?" We will first hear Madame Astoria on the negative.

Mrs. Bellamont Astoria. (Mrs. Astoria is a large woman. The usher places a soap box, with Fairy Soap conspicuously written on it. Mrs. Astoria mounts it very carefully, raises her lorgnette and calmly surveys the audience and announces): I hope you feel the honor done you in my coming, and that you will sit at my feet so to speak, and eagerly quaff at the fount of Knowledge. I would suggest that after my brief lecture you give me a vote of thanks, and then retire to your homes to meditate on the great thoughts I will endeavor to insert into your craniums. I will now talk on the subject, "Should woman obey the law?" and I assure you I am heart and soul on the negative side! Should woman obey the law? Most certainly not. Why should she obey that which she is in no way responsible for? She is allowed no voice in making the law, then why should she be accountable for its provisions? If she is not responsible enough to assist in formulating it, why should she be responsible for its enforcement?

Like the income tax as applied to woman, it is a form of taxation without representation.

Regarding corrective laws, she is not considered competent to pass on them, but perfectly competent to suffer them. She knows of a rope for corrective purposes, but as to whether it be used like the old-fashioned slipper, or applied to another part of the anatomy, is considered none of her affair. She is responsible enough to hang, however.

The law says, "Convicted by a jury of your peers." Who are woman's peers? Are they the gentlemen hanging around the corner saloon, looking for a jury job?

There is only one court where woman's voice is long enough and loud enough to be heard, and that is the divorce court. Woman has her innings there—and the chorus arising therefrom is appalling!

Our forefathers mentioned taxation without representation. Mrs. Astor, worth ten millions, must sit quiescent while her janitor votes as to her rate of taxation and its application to the commonwealth.

The great army of school teachers, training the coming generation, attend strictly to business, while the loafer, fresh from Jim Clancy's saloon, casts a ballot that ultimately decides her salary, her status, and even as to her marrying privileges.

The endless procession of girls and women going to and fro, mornings and evenings, are producers who are not recognized by the law, and who are *un*represented, and *mis*represented.

The mother who gives to the world sons has no voice as to the laws made to protect the child. She is in the same class as minors, Chinamen and imbeciles, preferably imbeciles, as the law deals most leniently with them. While the man may have made the law as favorable to woman as his point of view permits, the question is, is he capable of viewing the subject in every light, or is he only *part* of the speculum?

Is it a demonstrable truth that woman is not eligible to execute, but is perfectly eligible to execution? Her only hope when under the ban of the law is to be pretty, and have a jury. In that case, she can kill as many husbands as she finds necessary. Poor woman! She has to suffer the tail feathers cut off her hat, submit to censured hat-pins, substitute opaque for lace stockings, and reform from the peek-a-boo waist habit, fearing the effect on the moral fiber of the strong guardians of Public Administration! Suppose the law, which she has not made, does shear her of all these fascinating appendages, and nothing but the old woman is left! Will the law insure her liege Lord and Master not to wander around looking for other peek-a-boos and et-ce-tera to censor?

As to the awesome fear of the man that he will have to eat cold potatoes if his wife goes down to the corner to deposit a vote or consider a law, I think I may assure him it is without foundation. She is no more inclined to neglect her business than he is his. The average woman neither whistles, whittles, nor chews—so the chances are she won't do as much "hanging round" as he does. On the contrary, she will probably return home with renewed zest to pare potatoes and wash Johnnie's face, secure in the conviction that her vote, or law, will assist in electing Mrs. Brown, who stands for child protection, picture-show censorship, and sanitary alleys.

Wise men know that woman is the other *half,* not his one-third, or merely a rib. Admitting, however, that she is this rib, have you ever heard the story of the "tail that wagged the dog"? Its application is obvious.

Woman's relation to the law is a *joke* that is becoming *antiquated,* hence my solemnity. May we soon see the dawn of a keener sense of humor, that may assist in adjusting our lopsided convictions.

Thanking you, I respectfully retire.

Bridget Maloney (disgustedly): I consider that spach disgraceful ontirely.

President: We have listened to Mrs. Astoria with deep solicitude, and we will now hear Mrs. Katie Coward on the affirmative side of the question, "Should Women Obey the Law?"

Katie Coward: Madame President:—It is with deep pain and amazement that I listened to Mrs. Astoria's iconoclastic utterances. I am sure my dear husband is perfectly competent to *think* for *me* and to make laws to guide my trembling footsteps. And even if he were not, I am sure there are plenty of *other* men who *would* be competent.

Why should I want to leave the little sheltered nook where he has placed me at twenty-five per month, and go out into the cruel, wicked world to make laws he wouldn't like?

Of course we should obey the law if we want to be respectable, and my family have all been respectable and perfect ladies. If a woman does not like the law the way it is, why doesn't she influence some nice man to change it for her?

As for the tail-feathers, if a man don't like tail-feathers and says so in the law, then why don't she wear roses? I am sure they are just as becoming.

The law here in Punkville says a school teacher shouldn't get married. Well, who wants to marry a school teacher, anyhow? They shouldn't teach school if they want to get married.

The Bible says—obey your husband, and the law says "Amen," and it is a woman's duty to follow these injunctions if she expects to go to Heaven when she dies. Moreover, it is very necessary that she have an undisputed ticket to salvation, as the men of her family usually expect to squeeze in on her credit.

Mrs. Astoria's reference to the rib I consider in very poor taste. Anatomical references should be confined to medical schools and *never* referred to in public.

It is just that sort of woman who believes in Eugenics, and impertinent marriage licenses, and all that sort of particular foolishness. They even talk of grading us, like Berkshire pigs.

It's a wonder she didn't say something about rubbernecks when she was on the subject of lace stockings. I expected to hear a tasteless reference of that sort. We have enough to do if we attend to woman's inherited duty, that of guarding the weak-kneed morals of our husbands or sons, and converting them by our gentle, refining influence, even if it takes sixty-five years to do it, and they say it usually does.

I hope you will all consider what I have said, and feel and realize that "whatever is, is right" and what was "good enough for our mothers is good enough for us." Please, please, take a ladylike attitude on the subject.

President: One cannot fail but be impressed with this plea of Mrs. Katie Coward's——

(*Interruption—enter a big, stout Dutch woman, no corsets, full black skirt, calico waist, and woolen fascinator on her head. She carries a market basket in which is a live goose. She stands a moment at the door, then deposits her basket on the floor and puts her hands on her hips and announces*): I am from Sout St. Looie.

President: So I see; whom have we the pleasure of meeting?

Mrs. Buschweiser: Mine name iss it? Wilhelmina Buschweiser my name iss.

President: Did you have business with us today?

Mrs. Buschweiser: Pizness mit youse! Not so you can see it! Mit my own pizness I have all I can do. But I heard youse was meddling mit the brewery to shut it up, hein?

President: I believe we do not favor the brewery industry and interests.

Mrs. Buschweiser: The brewery interestings! What pizness have youse all mit the brewery interestings? Mine hoosband works mit the brewery! You wimen make me tired mit youse little dawg and youse childer, *not,* you have too much time to meddle mit der brewery interestings!

President (*dignifiedly*): Mrs. Buschweiser, you are out of order, please withdraw.

Mrs. Buschweiser (*defiant and indignant*): Yah! yah! Mit draww iss it. Well, Sout St. Looie iss going to vote for brewery interesting meddlers *not.* Do you get that? (*Exit.*)

Bridget Maloney (*hilariously*): Well, phat do ye think of that!

President: We deplore this incident very much. We will now proceed with the program. We have with us today Lady Castlewood Caustic, who is anxious to speak on her "Impressions of America."

Lady Caustic: Havin' arrived from Highland about ten days ago, and feelin' in that length of time I have become thoroughly conversant with things Hamerican, I would like to point out as delicately as possible some of your national defects.

In the first place, there is your butter. Why *do* you put so much salt in your butter? I cannot see how you can be so fresh and use that butter for a daily ration.

I would also like an explanation of your universal hattitude toward pie. I do not think people can be entirely moral and eat pie for breakfast. Salty butter, and pie, and no five o'clock tea! With such hincubuses how can you expect to become a progressive nation?

While visiting America, I had 'oped to meet Carrie Nation, as the only Hamerican with English characteristics, but I 'ear she is no more. I 'ope Mr. Carrie Nation is peaceful and 'appy.

I am sorry to perceive the lack of spirit in the American woman. I 'aven't seen a window smashed, or a letter-box burned since I came 'ere. 'Ow is a man going to know you really want the ballot if you don't explain it to him with a hatchet? Your wildest exploit seems to be getting on a soap-box to talk and you can't soft-soap heverybody.

Like Mrs. Spankhurst, I must express my regret at our limited stay, as I have greatly felt the need of rest and recreation since 'elping blow up that last jail. I 'ope when next I visit your glorious country, you will have awakened to the great necessity that in "times of peace you should prepare for war," especially when dealing with a man.

I thank you.

President: Thank you, Lady Caustic. Your unique point of view commends itself.

As you all know, there has been some talk of putting a tariff on bananas. Mrs. Paolo Simpleanna is here today to plead for the succulent fruit.

Mrs. Paolo S. (a dark woman dressed in vivid apparel. A gaudy shawl over her head, and a basket of bananas on her arm. She puts the basket down on the President's desk, somewhat to the horror of the Pres. and Sec.):

If they puta a tax upon banan
They would go to thirty centa for a dozen,
It is only a richa mana's plan
For to try to doa up his Dago cousin.
Now for 10 a centa we can filla up—
And save the peel to have a cheap a skatea,
He is always ready when we wanta sup;
And you justa paya Dagoes leetle freighta.
Americano has his water-melon,
And Germany his little pot of beer.
The Frenchman for frog-a-leg is yellin',
But for us a da banana man is here.
We bake a heem and boila heem and fry heem,
And he slipa down and tasta lika more.
If you puta heem in ice a cream and try heem
More bananas of da Dago you'll implore.
If you put a da peel upon the stair a
You will slida right a down a ver fast,
Where you're going to land you don't a much a carea,
You are sure to land a some where a at last.
All this pleasuah he will give da population,

And for you or heem it costa not a cent,
For eet's fun, you can't improve the situation,
A banano skin—a man—and wheere he went.
Den tax a heem a not a da banana,
For he feed a the reech and da poor,
Der's no fruit like heem a la Americano,
So let heem come in free, I do implore.

President: It has been proposed——

(*Interruption—Mrs. Maloney springs to her feet.*)

Mrs. Maloney: Shure and I taut dat Dago'd niver git trou talkin'. They ought-a-be—they ought to be exterminated! Shure this is a white man's counthry!

President (*at last recognizing her*): Mrs. Maloney, did you wish to speak?

Mrs. Maloney: Shure, Madame Prisidint, an' I'd like to make a little spach, and there's wan thing I'd like to know and that is if youse be the ladies who went up to the White House a few days ago and was tuk notice of by Pres. Wilson?

President (*complacently*): Yes; we sent some of our best-looking ladies.

Bridget Maloney: Shure, and the Prisidint is a perfect gentleman if he is a *Democrat for men only*! I'd like to ax ye another quistion. Be ye the ladies who put trou the Mithers' pinsion bill?

President: Our Club was very influential in that. We wrote two hundred and fifty thousand letters in its favor.

Mrs. Maloney: The Saints protect ye! If that be the kind of work ye be doin', then I'm for jinin yer union, and I'll take out me card no mather what it costs!

President: I would refer Mrs. Maloney to the Secretary.

Mrs. Maloney: Thank ye, thank ye, kindly.

Bridget Maloney (*to Secretary*): And phat do it cost to jine yer union?

Secretary: Five dollars for active—seven dollars for associate members.

Bridget Maloney: And phat do be the difference?

Secretary (*explaining*): Why the Actives can make speeches, and the Associates have to listen to them.

Bridget Maloney: Actives make spaches and Associates have to listen. Shure I'll be an Active. It do seem they git the bist o' the bargain. Five dollars to talk—seven dollars to listen. Say, gimme the five dollar bargain ticket. How soon after buying the ticket are ye allowed to talk?

President: I will now introduce Mrs. Tabby Garralous of Jefferson City, President of the Pink Cat Club, who will give us a brief dissertation on "Woman on a Pedestal," assisted by her Club.

(*Mrs. Garralous steps to the front of stage, and the Pink Cats, —bearing a banner with "Pink Cat Club" on it—and being decorated themselves with large pink bows, sit on stools in a semi-circle back of Mrs. Garralous and in chorus accent parts of the speech.*)

Mrs. Garralous: Madame President, Fellow Citizens:—We deeply deplore being obliged to speak in public (Chorus—We do, we do), feeling as we do that *much* of woman should be *seen* and little heard. (Cho., Much! Much! Much!) But I cannot witness woman toppling off the pedestal where man has placed her, without raising a protesting voice—(Chorus—Raising our voice! Raising our voice!) For ages she has stood on that Pedestal, like Patience on a Monument, always looking in one direction (Points up in air, as does chorus as it repeats Up in the air, air, air). While her worshiper, man, has been flitting from pedestal to pedestal (Chorus, Flitting! Flitting!).

Woman should use her gentle, refining *influence* on those dear and *near* to her (Chor., When they're near—when they're near) to obtain the reforms she talks about. (Chor., Talks! talks! talks!). Imagine woman sliding off the pedestal where man has placed her (Chor., Oh! Oh! Oh!), boldly walking down the street (Wow! Wow! Wow!), right by the corner saloon (Chor., She never goes in. She never goes in!), defiantly picking up a brand-new ballot never used before (Chor., Shocking! Shocking), double-crossing it in a most unladylike way (Chor., Double-crossing—double-crossing), and putting it in a ballot box just like a man. (Chor., Just like a man, just like a man.) It will change her whole character! (Chor., It will. It will.) Her

face will coarsen, her head grow bald and whiskers on her chin!!! (Chor., Chin-e—chin chin! Chin-e—chin chin!)

Oh, ladies, I implore you, stick your toes in the cracks of that old warped pedestal and climb back. (Chor., Back—back—back.)

Do not tempt Providence and break all precedent. (Chor., Precedent—precedent.) For if you do not follow precedent where will you be a-a-t! (Chor., At, at.) Go back! Go back to your little old monument and let man worship(?) in peace. (Chor. Peace, peace.)

President: Mrs. Garralous has spoken most feelingly and I am sure our heart strings all respond.

I have before me a projected bill on the subject of civic improvement. It is proposed to enlarge the children's playgrounds—to erect a rest house for men on Broadway and Washington avenue, and to establish a woman's cafe in the basement of the City Hall.

(*Mrs. Mike Feelin springs to her feet.*)

Madame President.

President: Mrs. Feelin.

Mrs. Feelin: I have come here as a member of the house of delegates to speak against that bill. What do we want of civic improvement? Is there anything in it for us? We are not in politics for our health. I am getting about tired of spending $20,000 here and $40,000 there building decorated ash-pits, while the wolf is clamoring at the door. What do we want of more children's playgrounds? We soon won't have any children to put in them—they're getting scarcer all the time!

As for the gentlemen's rest, haven't they enough to do in their homes without coming down on Broadway to sit down?

I don't so seriously object to the ladies' cafe in the basement. Of course we do need a little refreshment once in a while and gum is pretty dry without something to drink.

But I absolutely refuse to vote for a baby's playhouse, or a gentlemen's rest, unless I can be made to see their necessity, and you know money talks.

Mrs. Bunkum stands for recognition.

(*President rises and recognizes Mrs. Clancy Bunkum.*)

Mrs. Bunkum: Madame President:—I had intended, with Mrs. Feelin, to speak against that bill, but find I have left some of my notes on my desk. If you will kindly suspend business until I can telephone to the City Hall, the speaker, Mrs. Harry Gettum, who is coming out will bring 'em.

President: We will allow you a few minutes, Mrs. Bunkum.

Mrs. Bunkum: Thank you. Is this the telephone? Very well. Main 2323—no Main—no not *four* three, *two* three,—no Main 2323. Hello, hello, is this Main 2323? Forest! I am sorry to have troubled you. (*Wriggles the receiver up and down desperately.*) Hello, Central, you gave me the wrong exchange. I want Main 2323—no 23*23*, yes, that's right—Hello! hello! Is this the City Hall? The Morgue! "For the love of Mike!" I don't want the Morgue. I'm not a dead one *yet*,—Hello Central! You gave me the Morgue. I want Main 2323,—What? No answer, no one at home? Say, that's the City Hall and they're always at home, very much at home, ring again. Busy! (*Waits a little.*) Hello! Hello! Central? *Please* ring Main 2323 again—no answer. Give me the chief operator. What? Off on her vacation! Well, please ask the janitor to ring! At last! Is this the City Hall? Yes—well, I'd like to speak to Mrs. Harry Gettum, please —What's that? Just left! Well, I'll be—(*Drops the phone and strides in front of President.*) Madame President, I move that we do away with those phoney girls at Central and install wooden pegs. They're just as effective as wooden heads. (Sits down dejectedly for a moment, but on catching the eye of usher, motions for her, and selects some gum from the tray—pulls off pink paper, and philosophically puts gum in mouth, after offering it to lady nearest her.)

President: We are sorry to be obliged to dispense with Mrs. Bunkum's speech, but perhaps another time she will be prepared.

Madame Quietus Slickem, Chairman of the Civic Committee of the Tango Club, will now give a report.

Mrs. Slickem: Madame President, Fellow Citizens:—As chairman of the Committee of the Tango Club I am pleased to report that our work has been most satisfactory the past year.

We were asked to investigate the rumor that some indiscretions had been going on at the "Old Ladies' Home," which we did with a *great deal of pleasure.*

We conducted a quiet investigation, after asking the Post-Dispatch to assist us. After most thorough inquiry we found nothing serious. Old Mrs. Angy Cooper and Dollie Snodgrass had been out a couple of nights till nearly ten o'clock, but they proved conclusively they had been at Broadway and Washington avenue, looking at Kline's millinery, and that was as far as they had gone. Their excuse was that they were celebrating their birthdays. They are nearly the same age, Angy being seventy-six and Dollie seventy-eight. We are surprised that so many of the papers got hold of it, and take this opportunity of settling the many rumors in regard to the Home.

Bridget Maloney (*virtuously*): Is those poor old crathers scandalizing yet!

Mrs. Slickem: We have assisted in getting "The Father's pension bill" through the legislature, but hear that Gov. Major will veto it, unless the amendment is made that the man must have at least ten well authenticated children.

There remains in our treasury $1.27. One faction wants to reserve it as a fund toward paying a committee's way to Jefferson City to assist in getting through the bill for "indigent women politicians," but the other side insist on saving it as a nucleus for a fund to be used for the amelioration of overdone society matrons, the money being used for bread dough on which they may practice. It is also suggested that yellow soap he bought, which, mixed with water and applied judiciously, is the best known panacea for enui, and is guaranteed to accomplish more than the best conducted Bridge party. A special meeting has been called to consider this proposition.

Thanking you for this opportunity of informing you of the magnitude of our work, I am respectfully,

Mrs. Quietus Slickem,

Chairman Civic Committee of the Tango Club.

Usher: Madame President, Hrs. Harry Gettum is here with Mrs. Bunkum's speech.

(*Mrs. Gettum comes in with a roll of wall paper. President looks at it with amazement. Mrs. Gettum hands it to Mrs. Bunkum.*)

President: Does that contain *all* your speech, Mrs. Bunkum?

Mrs. Bunkum: All but the spontaneous part, Madame President.

President: Well, we will give you a whole day for that at the end of the week, Mrs. Bunkum.

Mrs. Bunkum: Thank you.

President: We have with us today the Chairman of the Committee on the New Charter, who will submit some of its provisions for our approval. I am glad to present Mrs. Georgia Sparks.

Mrs. Sparks (*Mrs. Sparks, dressed very mannishly and with a brusque air, opens an official looking paper tied with blue ribbon, and coquettish tassels*): Madame President, Fellow Citizens:—After great deliberation we are prepared to submit the following provisions of the New City Charter:

First—It is proposed to erect a water fountain, every now and then—cups furnished free of charge—stamps given with every cup—with two cups a transportation ticket home, and a written guarantee of sobriety. This to be maintained by the money saved from contributing to the beer tax.

Second—Ways and means are being considered of utilizing the ashes found in such profusion in our alleys. It is suggested that they might be used, combined with sack cloth, by some of our present politicians when this administration is over.

Third—It is proposed that instead of a really truly Mayor, we send to Chicago to Sears, Roebuck & Co. and get a guaranteed, all wool and yard wide business man to run our city affairs on a business basis, and to use the money thus saved to advertise Punkville.

Fourth—It is proposed taking the emigrant wagons off our street railway system and appointing a committee to find an up-to-date get-there-quick method of transportation, that will get the business man down town in time to phone to his wife that business prevents his coming home to dinner.

(*Interruption. Two little girls come noisily in, dropping their school books and causing much confusion. Ladies look at them indignantly; they sit down in front seats after Fanny has given the Pres. an apple and a stick of peppermint candy.*)

Fifth—The suggestion is made that our Public Schools be used as recreation centers. Their maintenance as such will be cheaper than saloons, and the view better. It will give teachers, parents and pupils a chance to become acquainted and to co-operate. It will also give the female portion of the community an opportunity to demonstrate their relation to the Public Welfare.

Sixth—It is proposed to abolish the house of delegates and use the material therewith to build a dam (although they are hardly considered worth it); this dam to furnish light, power and hot air for the whole city.

Mrs. Gettum springs to her feet indignantly: I consider that a most outrageous proposition, and I take exception right there. It is an unjustice to us, it is an injustice to our constituents——

President (*severely*): Mrs. Gettum, you are out of order, please sit down. Mrs. Sparks proceed.

Mrs. Sparks: Seventh—It is proposed that automobiles be required to stop at every street crossing, the driver to rise to his feet and make a speech, telling which way he is going and why, also what make of machine he has and its capabilities—which he is always willing to do.

Eighth—It is proposed that the Montessori Method of teaching be applied to our Public Administrators, under medical supervision, so they will not expand too rapidly in an unaccustomed direction.

Ninth—It is proposed that every pedestrian be obliged to carry an alarm clock, and that he start the alarm at every street crossing, so he will be in the same class as automobiles, and entitled to the same privileges.

Tenth—It is proposed to compel street cars to furnish safety belts, hanging from the roof, that the *pedestrian* therein can attach, and thus hang gracefully and securely. It is presumed this will be beneficial both to dispositions and corns.

Eleventh—It is proposed in the spring house-cleaning to give the billboards a vigorous coat of whitewash. The whitewash can be obtained free of charge at the City Hall.

That is all for the day, Madame President.

President: These projected reforms give us much food for meditation.

(Turning toward the little girls who have taken a front seat) Little girls, did you want something?

Susy: Yethum, Madame President, I came to speak a piece. (She hands Pres. a book and points to piece she is to speak.)

President: Very well, we will be glad to hear you. (Announces to the audience): Little Miss Susy Green will speak a piece, the title of which is, "When Mother Goes to Vote."

Susy (in a bashful school-girl manner):

Oh! vacant day and lonesome night,
When mother goes to vote.
I'm sure I do not think it right,
That mother goes to vote.

The bread gets sour and falls down flat,
When mother goes to vote.
And father's just a door-mat,
Since she began to vote.

The baby cries most all the time,
When mother goes to vote,
And father's singing does not rhyme,
Since she goes out to vote.

Poor father's socks are full of holes,
Since mother has the vote.
And oh! we are such hungry souls
Because she goes to vote.

The dog has lost his joyful bark,
Since mother goes to vote.
He sneaks around out in the dark,
Because she has the vote.

The cat puts on some awful airs
Since mother got to vote.
When she meows dear father swears
And calls himself a goat.

And so the family's all broke up,
Because she goes to vote.
We wish she never had woke up
And found that she could vote.

(*A news-boy is heard outside the door.*)

Newsboy: Extra! Extra! All about the great sensation! Only five cents a copy—Extra! Extra!

(The usher rushes to the door and gets a copy—comes back to the middle of the stage and reads.)

All about the great sensation! Ten dollar hats for nine ninety-eight!

(The whole convention gather round her, exclaiming.) She reads again in a loud, excited tone—"Ten dollar hats for"—(she throws the paper on the floor and runs for the door—the whole convention after her.)

Fanny Bashful whines, "Get me a hat, too, mother. Get me a hat, too."

In the excited exit chairs are tipped over, umbrellas dropped, etc., etc.

President loudly pounds her gavel and desperately calls on them to be seated, but is finally left alone on the stage. She falls back in her chair in an exhausted manner and sits a moment, then her eyes fall on the paper.

She rises, picks up the paper, scans it, and repeats in an awed voice: "Ten dollar hats for nine ninety-eight."

(She throws down the paper, grasps her umbrella and starts for the door, faster and faster, till nearly on a run when reaching it.)

Comment—What are affairs of state when compared with a hat sale!

For information regarding the rights to produce this farce
and for copies of the manuscript, address
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